GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3127
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
OVERCHARGING AND CHEATING OF CONSUMERS BY OPERATORS
Agarwal Shri Dhirendra;Prasad Shri Hari Kewal

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of overcharging and cheating of the consumers by STD/ISD/PCO operators have come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof, circle-wise;

(c) the number of operators against whom action has been taken during the last two years, circle-wise;

(d) the number of operators whose licences have been cancelled;

(e) whether the Government has any mechanism to ascertain such cases;

(f) if so, the details in this regard; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) Sir, few cases of overcharging and cheating of consumers by STD/ISD/PCO operators have been reported during the last two years i.e. 2005-06 and 2006-07 (up to 28.2.2007).

(b) to (d) the details of complaints received and action taken is given in the Annexure. Licenses/Agreements of seven (7) PCO operators have been cancelled.

(e) & (f) Yes, Sir. Broadly, the following mechanism is in place in BSNL/MTNL to prevent misuse of PCOs by the Franchisees:-

i. Periodical surprise checks are carried out by field staff of BSNL/MTNL to check any kind of misuse including overcharging and tampering with the PCO machine installed by the francisees.
ii. Only Type Approved instrument is allowed to be used by the PCO operator.
iii. Periodical surprise checks of the PCO franchisees are also carried out by the Vigilance Cells of BSNL/MTNL to ensure that the guidelines of provision of PCOs are followed scrupulously by them.

(g) Does not arise in view of (e) and (f) above.